

12. C*.i

T H E

Lord Bishop of *CARLISLE*'s

S E R M O N

B E F O R E T H E

H O U S E O F L O R D S,

January 30th, 1747.

THE

Lord Bishop of CARLISLE

S E R M O N

BEFORE THE



HOUSE OF LORDS

January 30th 1747.

A
S E R M O N

Preached before the

HOUSE OF LORDS,

IN THE

Abbey-Church of *Westminster*,

On SATURDAY, *January* 30th, 1747:

Being the Day appointed to be observed as the Day
of the MARTYRDOM of King CHARLES I.

R. Osbaldeston B Y
RICHARD, Lord Bishop of *CARLISLE*.

L O N D O N:

Printed by JOHN OLIVER, in *Bartholomew - Close*, near
West-Smithfield.

M.DCC.XLVIII.

6

Die Martis 2^o Februarii, 1747.

ORDERED by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That the Thanks of this House be, and are hereby given to the Lord Bishop of *Carlisle*, for the Sermon by Him preached before this House on *Saturday* last in the Abbey-Church *Westminster*; and He is hereby desired to cause the same to be printed and published.



ASHLEY COWPER,
Cler. Parliamentor.

NUMBERS XXI. 5, 6.

And the people spake against GOD, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the Wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water, and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

THE *Israelites* were GOD's chosen People, and every where distinguished by his Favours; and though, above all others, they possessed eminent Marks of his Love and Kindness, yet, through their Folly, they were not less remarkable for their many Errors. One, they seem all along to retain; to impute the Calamities and Afflictions that befel them, not to the Judgment of GOD for their Sins, but to the want of Conduct and Prudence in Those, that ruled

ruled over them ; as if their Care and Foresight could have absolutely commanded Success in all Undertakings, or have removed evil Things at Pleasure ; and divine Providence had been a Stranger to their Affairs, void of Wisdom to direct their Counsels, or Mercy to interfere for their Good, or Power to chastise them for their Iniquities.

THESE perverse Dispositions became so habitual to the *Israelites*, that they were seldom pleased ; never satisfied in any Condition : When easy, they wished for a change of Measures, to gratify new Desires ; when in a more perplexed Situation, they murmured and complained, and never failed to accuse their Governors of Mistakes, as the Cause of all their Sufferings. They were no sooner delivered in a miraculous Manner from the *Egyptian* Bondage, and placed under the immediate Protection of the Most High GOD, instead of Tyrants and Task-masters, than they were ready to mutiny on every Occasion in the Wilderness : Sometimes their Complaint was for want of *Bread* ; and, having Bread, for want of *Water* ; and, having Water, for want of *Flesh* : And when supplied with Abundance, and sensible their Clamor against *Moses* was groundless, — Why hast Thou — brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger ? Yet, when he went from them upon the Mount, to receive the Will of GOD for their Instruction ; they caused *Aaron* to make a molten calf, and they said, These be thy Gods, O *Israel*, which brought thee

thee up out of the land of Egypt; as if all that GOD had done for them, was less worthy of their Regard, than the Image they had set up; and the Plenty He gave them, deserved not to be acknowledged with Thanks: For with one Voice *they spake against GOD, and against Moses*; declared their Irreverence for the One, and Contempt of the other, through their utter Abhorrence of the Power that ruled over them.

FOR this Blasphemy against GOD, and false Accusation of *Moses*, The LORD sent *fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died*. — The Sin of the *Israelites* was a complicated Crime, made up of their Falshood and Injustice, aggravated with all the Circumstances of Impiety towards GOD. By the one, they depreciated his Beneficence, and reviled his Goodness, in providing no better for them; by the other, they levelled all the Darts of poisonous Tongues against *Moses* the Servant of the LORD, to destroy his Credit, and put an End to his Authority; so murmured not against him, *but against the LORD* of Heaven and Earth, for appointing an Agent, as they imagined, weak, and unfit to conduct them through the Wilderness, from whom they often revolted, and against whom on all Occasions they were ready to rebel.

THESE Sins, into which the *Israelites* fell, and the Punishments that attended them, are recorded in the Old Testament, as an Account of the Manner of
GOD'S

GOD's dealing with that People ; as the Measures of his past Government of the World, and such as will be the Measures of his Government of all Nations upon Earth, in the like Circumstances. Hence St Paul argues upon the Case, *All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.*—Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. What does the Apostle's Argument prove, but that Complaints against the Dispensations of GOD, or causeless Accusations of the Authority He permits to be established for the public Safety, will as surely bring Destruction in the common Course of Things, as GOD, for the like Crimes, in an extraordinary Manner, swept away Numbers of the *Israelites* by *Serpents*, *Plagues*, and other Instruments of his Wrath?

WHETHER the Sins of the Age past, which we are now met together to acknowledge, and which brought down the just Judgments of GOD upon these Kingdoms, by the Tragedy of this Day, were of this Kind, can't be improper to enquire. For if it cannot be distinguished, in what the Sins of our Forefathers consisted, our Sorrow for them will be partial, not proportioned to the Nature of the Offences, neither shall we know how to avoid the like for the future.

To distinguish these, in order to abhor and avoid them ;

I. IN

I. IN the first Place, If the History of those Times, with which every one is acquainted, may be credited, no Judgment can be formed, but that the Confederates in Iniquity, Enemies to G O D and true Religion, were then numerous. And this we learn, not by their open Professions of Atheism and Irreligion, but by their false Pretences of Honour for G O D, and Zeal for his Name, by pretending to espouse his Word and Doctrines, but, at the same Time, suffering them to be interpreted in no other Sense, but such as would countenance every Extravagance of Enthusiasm and irregular Passion, in the Pursuit of secular Interest and worldly Dominion.

THROUGH these Delusions, every wild Imagination in the Head was receiv'd as an high Degree of Sanctity in the Heart, as an uncommon Instance of divine Grace, and Communication from the Holy Spirit; as if sufficient to sanctify evil Desires and gross Errors, or change them into pious and godly Undertakings.

BY this Means, true Honour for G O D, and real Holiness, was in a great Measure abolished. The Will of Man was implicitly received and obeyed, but the Word of G O D neither treated with Reverence nor Regard. If any Reverence for his Name was retain'd in the Lips, it was without Influence upon the Heart; not design'd to advance, but to undermine his Authority, either by unfair Deductions from his revealed Will,

B

to

to subvert his established Truths, or by false Glosses upon the Holy Scriptures, to destroy the righteous Ordinances of a pure Church. Such Professions of Godliness were but the Affectation of possessing Virtues, which were little valued; and though it carried an outward Form of Goodness, it was but with the greater Pomp, and Art of Hypocrisy, to insult the divine Omniscience, rebel against GOD, and blaspheme his holy Name; which as fully proclaimed the Folly of *the Fool*, as if he had *said in his heart, There is no GOD*; when the Pretence of Obedience to his Will was made the Instrument to turn Men Apostates from a true Faith, and Reprobates to every good Work.

II. IT appears, likewise, plainly from History, in the Second Place, that Murmurs and Complaints against lawful Governors, were equally notorious in the Times referred to. From what Fountain these flowed, as their original Cause, whether from Errors in the Rulers, as it was scarce possible for the wisest to avoid all Mistakes; or from the Corruption of an abandoned and profligate People, cannot easily be determined. At present, to see into the secret Motive of Actions, is very difficult; and to explain the Measures of Policy, used by a Court or People in a distant Age, transmitted to Posterity by Records, sometimes partial, is perhaps beyond our Skill and Capacities. But though we do not exactly know all that then passed, yet we know enough to conclude, there were Errors and Mistakes on all Sides: That all Ranks and Orders
of

of Men, as now, were then Sinners; and all Parties, as Sinners, criminal. Not that it can be denied, but that as excellent Virtues shone in the Royal MARTYR, and in the Adherents of his Cause, as well as in others that at first opposed him, as any Age, before or since, hath produced; as also, that G O D permitted their Virtues to be destitute of Authority, and Credit sufficient to stop the Current of Disorders, that then prevailed, and at last, to be swallowed up by a Deluge of Wickedness, was manifest from the Event. Therefore to charge any Set of Men, engaged in the Contention, as the sole Cause of the heavy Judgments that fell upon these Kingdoms, is not at all consistent with Truth: Or to accuse all as equally criminal, is as false as it is unjust. But that all contributed, more or less, as Sinners, to the general Ruin, cannot be contradicted.

COULD the Sins of that Age be more narrowly view'd, it would scarce tend to make our Humiliation for them more sincere; and perhaps, might be the Occasion of exasperating each other, by the Recital of old Errors, which blemished and disgraced all concerned in them; and never should be remembered by us or others, without Sorrow and Lamentation, that the like may be avoided.

BUT sure, without Offence it may be observed, that the Crown was then, though it had not been long, supported by the Power and Strength of three Kingdoms, and in proportion to its Strength and Power,

was induced to advance its Authority beyond just Bounds: As also, on the other Side, with equal Truth it may be observed, that the Nation had been then blessed with a long Peace, which instead of its Inhabitants applying to honest and good Purposes, as is sometimes the Case, contributed to debauch them with Plenty and Ease. By these Means they became vain and extravagant, proud and ambitious, neither contented with their just Rights, nor satisfied with their lawful Privileges; but hated all Measures that opposed their iniquitous Projects to serve themselves, by the Hurt of others, or Ruin of their Country.

UNDER the Influence of these destructive Notions, Property became every where precarious. No Man's Possessions were safe. Mutual Trust and Confidence, among Members of the same Church and State, no longer subsisted. Honesty, and fair Dealing declined. Wrath and Contention prevailed. Rage and Fury increased, till *Strife* ran its Course, *as when one letteth out water*, that with a rapid Current overflows its Banks, and spreads like a Deluge every where. A Scene of less Distress could hardly be expected to ensue, where neither GOD was truly honoured, nor lawful Governors obeyed: And the Conclusion was natural, that Vice would prosper; every Man would follow the Inventions of his Heart, to gratify evil Desires; and according to the Course of Sin, one evil Desire would bring forth another; Ambition, Avarice; Avarice, Fraud; Fraud, Treachery; Treachery, Diffimulation; Diffimulation,

Diffimulation, Falshood; Falshood, Injustice; Injustice, Oppression; and all the Species of Iniquity unite to overthrow, either Powers that were thought sufficient, or Persons active, to stop the Progress of Unrighteousness.

To oppose the Machinations of evil Doers with Courage, is so full a Testimony of honest Resolutions in the upright Man, that he never escapes their Censures, nor fails to feel their Resentment, for they *are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest*, agitated with the Waves of Strife, and Contention; never ceasing to vilify and defame all, that have Integrity and Wisdom enough to traverse their Designs, or obstruct their Undertakings. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that they are at perpetual Enmity with the Laws of GOD and Man, and hate nothing more than Persons who endeavour to chain up their Hands from Rapine, and confound their Devices. Over whom, should these Sons of Violence ever prevail, the Consequences must infallibly be these: The Rules of Justice will be trampled upon; known Laws will lose their Authority; the Bonds of Peace and Order will be destroyed, and honest Men left destitute of Aid and Relief. For how can they support themselves, where *the faithful shall fail from among the children of men?* or how can they be safe, amidst the Floods of Ungodliness and Iniquity, if GOD, for secret Reasons, unknown to us, denies his Assistance for their Defence? Had *ten righteous persons been found in Sodom*, GOD *had spared that wicked and debauched city,*

city, and his mercies had been great; but where none are righteous, can his Blessings be expected? If some be Good, in comparison of others more corrupt, yet as none are perfect, should the less virtuous and more wicked, sink in the same common Calamity, this is no Blemish upon the Equity of GOD's Judgments. For by his moral Attributes, and revealed Will, it is manifest, that the Righteous never undergo Tribulation and Distress, but for the Improvement of their Faith and Virtue, that they may be made more perfect thro' sufferings; and it is certain, whatever may be our Thoughts of his Government of the World, it is always just and merciful.

WHETHER GOD permits Vice to prosper, or Virtue to be distressed; or is pleased to let iniquitous Schemes succeed, or good Undertakings miscarry; whether He *puts down the mighty from his seat, or exalts the humble and meek*; whether He gives Victory in Battle to the Weak or the Strong; or visits for Sins in the Age they appear, or in a third or fourth Generation; or permits the Righteous to fall into *Perils and Dangers*; or to suffer in *Prisons by Stripes*; or by untimely Death; whether we can unravel the hidden Cause of these Events, as they are the LORD's doing, they are as certainly right, as GOD is true and faithful.

NATURAL and moral Evils subsist by GOD's Permission, neither intimate any Defect in his Justice or Mercy.

Mercy. The former He hath used in all Ages, to chastise the Baseness of the latter. Frequently He corrects the Sins of one Nation, by the Follies of another; and sometimes permits the Iniquities of the same People, to be the Instrument of his Wrath for their Destruction.

THE *Jews* He all along treated in this Manner; When obedient to his Will, they were happy; but when they were rebellious against his Commands, his Punishments attended them; executed either by Famine, or the Pestilence; or by their Malice and Hatred against each other; or by mighty Armies called from distant Parts, to make them captives, or lay their Country waste.

IF all the Devastations, that in the Course of Time have run through the different Empires of the World, could be exactly surveyed; it cannot be doubted, but that national Sins would every where be found to precede and complete their Ruin. — Can the Calamities then, these Kingdoms have at any Time suffered, be ascribed to any other Cause? The barbarous Murder of this Day, cannot be contemplated in any other Light; nor the Madness of the People, in pursuing Measures for their Safety, that effectually destroyed it; nor their Delusion, in imagining all their base Designs were dictated by G O D, and conformed to his Will, till neither any Sense of true Religion, nor common Honesty remained.

THESE

THESE Errors were every where espoused, and tenaciously adhered to; infected Palaces and Cottages, left none undefiled; spread through Camps and Cities; and at last ended, in all Mens—*beating their plowshares into swords, and their pruning-hooks into spears*: in Acquaintance and Neighbours plundering and preying upon each other; in seeing *folly set in great dignity, and the rich in low place*; and *servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth*; in the untimely Death of a religious King; and, in his stead, *an ungodly man set to rule over the Land*.

CAN these Errors, so destructive to the Honour of GOD, and the Safety of Men, be viewed in any other Light, than as Executioners of the divine Vengeance for the Sins of the Nation? Or can the Sins of the Nation be compared with those Events, without Sorrow for them, and an Abhorrence of Iniquity at present, lest Sin should again bring down the Wrath of GOD upon these Kingdoms?

THE Remembrance of our Forefathers Offences, and GOD's Judgments for them, is an Admonition to remind every Age, to learn *to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before GOD*. If the Remembrance of them does not produce this Effect, it is useless. It is to no Purpose to remember the *Israelites* in Disorder and Confusion, when dissatisfied with
with

with the Dispensations of GOD, and the Administrations of his Servants; or this Nation in Distress and Ruin, when disobedient to the Precepts of true Religion, and discontented with the established Laws of our excellent Government; if these Examples do not teach us to abhor Irreligion and Strife; and to extinguish turbulent Passions, that would seduce us to disobey GOD, and our lawful Governors; the real Use of this Day's Sorrow and Humiliation, is little attended to.

NATIONAL Calamities, visibly derived from past Sins, add new Light, or are a new Sanction to divine and human Laws, instituted for the publick Peace; as they demonstrate, if these had been universally obeyed, so many Volumes, filled with the Desolations of Mankind by Civil Wars, had never appeared in the World; nor the Murmurs and Complaints of the *Israelites, against GOD, and against Moses*, have been left upon Record; nor this Day been annually remarked by us for its Infamy and Disgrace.

PAST Errors, it is true, cannot be altered; but when they are acknowledged with Sorrow, Men are brought to consider the Baseness of these Deviations from the Principles of true Religion; see the dreadful Consequence of wicked Pursuits; and so are preserved from the like for the future.

IT is the want of due Obedience to religious and civil Institutions, that occasions Men to be insolent

C

and

and wanton, to have their Appetites and Passions under no Restraint, and to be always ready to injure one another. Hence they become peevish and clamorous, complain of Grievances, where they feel none; use their *Christian liberty as clokes of maliciousness*; ascribe the Delusion of evil Minds to the Word of GOD, and Unrighteousness to the Dictates of Conscience: Thus they go on to believe every Absurdity right; to murmur against wise Measures for the publick Safety, as if destructive of Government; to calumniate Superiors, and declaim against all set over them, if possible, to seduce Multitudes; *to be unstable in all their ways*; to delight in Contradictions; *to put good for evil, and sweet for bitter*; as if the Safety of Civil Society was not preserved by the Love and Union of its Members, but by their Strife and Contention.

WHETHER this Age hath fallen into the like Sins, for which GOD of old punished the *Israelites*, is a disagreeable Enquiry, and too ungrateful even to enter, and much less dwell upon. But *let us not deceive ourselves, and say, we have no sin*. Rather let us reflect upon the Judgments of GOD, that did lately, or do still hang over us. Can the *Rebellion*, that not long ago spread Terror every where; or the *Mortality*, that at present threatens to lay our Fields waste; or Nations rising up against Nations, from one side of the Globe to the other, to sacrifice each other as Victims to their Rage and Fury, be considered; without every Man's being led seriously to reflect, whether his Sins have not contributed to bring down these

these Judgments upon us; whether the Sins of the Nation do not justly deserve the Vengeance of the LORD, if He should *be extreme to mark what is done amiss*; whether the Ridicule of true Religion, and Contempt of GOD's Ordinances, openly avowed in Defiance of his Authority, do not provoke Him to Anger; whether a Prostitution of the Conscience, to the selfish Views of Avarice and Ambition, or to the Pleasures of Lust and Sensuality, frequently complied with and delighted in, does not call upon GOD to pour out his Indignation upon a sinful People; whether the Licentiousness of evil Tongues, that are loud and open against the Wisdom of good Counsels, and of Pens dipped in Gall to blacken and defame reasonable and religious Measures for the Security of our Peace, may not cause GOD to forsake us, and suffer us to fall into the Hands of our Enemies.

THESE Inquiries are worthy the strict Attention of all, who retain either any Sense of Duty towards their GOD, their King, or their Country; and in whatever they have been faulty, to repent and amend. If every Man will amend one; there is no Danger that we shall provoke GOD again to be angry with us, or fall under his Judgments, or be made the Instrument of his Vengeance, to destroy one another, as the natural Consequence of our Iniquities.

SOLOMON's Observation of old, was—*Righteousness exalteth a nation.* This hath been so far verified by

Experience, that it hath been seldom known, where Virtue and true Religion flourish, and the People are honest and righteous, but they are happy and prosperous.

HAPPY in Kings, as conspicuous for Goodness as Dignity; as much revered for their Virtues, as for the Crown they wear; who rule with Moderation and Meekness, and make Justice and Equity the Characteristic of their Reigns. Happy in the Prospect of having illustrious Princes, for Ages to come, to be the Defenders of their holy Faith and civil Rights. Happy in wise Laws, promulgated for the common Good, that are impartially executed for the *punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.* Happy in honest Rulers, and a religious People, that are uniform in their Obedience to GOD, and Love to Men. By this Means, *are without complaints in their streets; void of murmurers, walking after their own lusts; and of those, whose mouths speak great swelling words, having mens persons in admiration, because of advantage.*

MANY of these eminent Marks of GOD's Favour, to distinguish us to be a happy People, we have long possessed, and still enjoy; and if we be not so happy in all Circumstances as we could wish, our Misfortunes can never be imputed to the holy Religion we profess; nor to our Government, known above all others for its Excellencies; nor to the most indulgent Father of our Country, who, under GOD, hath preserved them
both

both safe in Defiance of all Enemies: But our Sins and Iniquities must be blamed, as they really are the Cause of every Grievance, and of wanting any Thing good and convenient for us.

IT is our iniquities that make a separation between GOD and us, and our sins that cause him to hide his face from us; that when we fast and pray, he will not bear our cry. But if these be repented of, if the lips that have spoken lies; the tongue that hath muttered perverse things; the thoughts that have conceived mischief, be reformed and amended, and all become willing and obedient to walk in the statutes, and keep the commandments of the Lord; we may be assured, he will give peace in our land, and we shall lie down in safety, and none shall make us afraid; no Power of Enemies shall approach to hurt us, nor their Sword to destroy us, but GOD will be our Protector, and He only will make us dwell in safety.

NOW unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; To the only wise GOD, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

The logo of the British Museum, featuring a crown above the words "BRITISH" and "MUSEUM" in a circular arrangement.

